BRITISH COLUMBIA

NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Forests

WILLIAMS LAKE ALLOWABLE ANNUAL CUT ANNOUNCED

VICTORIA – The new allowable annual cut for the Williams Lake timber supply area will remain at current levels, apart from a minor adjustment to account for land transferred to woodlot licences and a community forest licence.

British Columbia chief forester Larry Pedersen announced today that the allowable annual cut will be 3,768,400 cubic metres, down slightly from 3,807,000 cubic metres, effective Jan. 1, 2003. It includes 850,000 cubic metres to harvest lodgepole pine stands damaged by a mountain pine beetle infestation in the 1980s and the new beetle outbreak.

"Last year, during my preliminary review, it appeared the harvest level for the mountain pine beetle infestation could drop, but surveys taken last summer show the latest beetle infestation is presenting a major threat to the timber supply in the Williams Lake area," Pedersen said. "While only extremely cold weather can stop the beetle populations, increased logging will help to reduce the spread, recover the value of damaged timber and speed up forest regeneration."

The Williams Lake timber supply area covers about 4.9 million hectares in the central Interior. It includes the city of Williams Lake and the smaller communities of Alexis Creek, Riske Creek, Big Creek, Tatla Lake, Nimpo Lake, Anahim Lake, 150 Mile House, Big Lake, Horsefly, Likely and McLeese Lake.

The determination of the allowable annual cut includes the requirements of the Cariboo-Chilcotin land-use plan; new protected areas; streams, lakes and wetlands; caribou and mule deer habitat and biodiversity. It excludes 23,600 cubic metres administered now as woodlot licences, as well as 15,000 cubic metres administered as a community forest licence. Allowable annual cuts for woodlot and community forest licences are set separately.

The Williams Lake decision is the 34th of 37 allowable annual cut determinations for timber supply areas in the second provincewide timber supply review. The timber supply review is a detailed and comprehensive process that ensures harvest rates sustain ecological values like biodiversity and wildlife, as well as timber, jobs and economic benefits.

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A copy of the chief forester's allowable annual cut determination for the Williams Lake timber supply area and the summary of public input on the Williams Lake timber supply review are available on the Ministry of Forests Web site at www.for.gov.bc.ca/tsb/tsr2/tsa/tsa37/tsa37.htm and at the following Forest Service offices:

- Cariboo forest region, 250-398-4345
- Chilcotin forest district, 250-394-4700
- Horsefly forest district, 250-620-3200
- Williams Lake forest district, 250-305-2001

For more information on the timber supply review, visit www.for.gov.bc.ca/tsb on the Internet.

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Visit the province's Web site at http://www.gov.bc.ca/ for online information and services.

Media contact:

Eric Johansen
Timber Supply Area Planner, Cariboo Forest Region
Ministry of Forests
250 398-4345

Melanie Boyce
Timber Supply Branch
Ministry of Forests
250 953-4134